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C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 005104

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: REFORMING THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION: JORDAN

REF: STATE 114051

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires David Hale for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

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1. (C) Poloff met with Ambassador Ziad Majali, head of the human rights directorate of the Jordanian Foreign Ministry, on June 23 to discuss USG priorities for reforming the UN Human Rights Commission (reftel). Majali said that Jordan is very supportive of efforts to reform the UN, especially with regard to the Commission on Human Rights. His reaction to the USG priorities for a new Human Rights Council (HRC) was positive, noting that they were a good foundation on which to begin meaningful dialogue. He appreciated that there was language limiting the mandate of the HRC, such as stating that the body should not be "another Security Council" replete with economic and military sanctions for non-compliers. He said that the challenge remains, however, to convince other nations that this will be the case. Majali said that Jordan will engage other Arab League states to offer support for UN reform, and will encourage open minded discussions at the upcoming Organization of the Islamic Conference meeting in Yemen.

2. (C) Majali cautioned that in his personal view, some of the USG reform "priorities for the Commission on Human Rights" will be difficult to achieve. For example, he noted that while the proposal calls for membership in the HRC to be exclusive of countries subject to investigations of abuses, it also calls for seats to be allocated regionally, five of which would go to the Africa Group. Majali remarked that it would be difficult to find five countries in this group that would meet the requirements for membership on the council. He said that he is optimistic that some compromise will be met that ensures positive reform and offers assurances to the South. Although Majali hoped that a consensus could be reached in the three months from now until the issue comes to a head in New York in September, he was concerned that this would not be enough time. He added that Security Council reform would dominate all reform discussions, leaving little room for an agreement on the HRC.

HALE